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A

SABBATH DISCOURSE

ON THE DEATH OF

HON. RUFUS CHOATE,

TOGETHER WITH THE

ADDRESS AT HIS FUNERAL.

BY

NEHEMIAH ADAMS, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE ESSEX STREET CHURCH, BOSTON.



BOSTON:

J. E. TILTON AND COMPANY.

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A SERMON

PREACHED

TO THE ESSEX STREET CONGREGATION,

BOSTON,

Sabbath Morning, July 17, 1859,

WITH REFERENCE TO THE DEATH OF

HON. RUFUS CHOATE,

LATE A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION.

BY

NEHEMIAH ADAMS, D. D., PASTOR.



## S E R M O N .

---

TO HIM THAT MADE GREAT LIGHTS : FOR HIS MERCY  
ENDURETH FOREVER.—Psalm cxxxvi. 7.

THAT vacant pew, covered with habiliments of mourning, tells its own sad tale. The last time that most of us saw that departed fellow-worshipper and friend in public, he was on the platform in front of this pulpit, at the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the pastor's settlement. The part which he took on that occasion is too deeply impressed on your minds to need anything more than this passing allusion.

Before he rose to speak, we had listened to the beautiful and touching words of that chanted hymn, "The Anniversary of Twenty-five Years ago." The prominent words of those stanzas were, "Passing away! Passing away!" The thought occurred to me at the time, whether he would have chosen that such a strain, in that minor key, should be the immediate prelude to his remarks. Alas that the words of that strain should first of all have been fulfilled in him! He himself was "passing away." That great mind has fled. This week, the waning moon, unless the clouds conceal from her the sight, will look upon a vessel making toward this harbor freighted with a form as precious as any that ever passed over, or entered, the sepulchres of the sea. Blessed be God, that

those sepulchres are not to receive him! He passionately loved “the literature of the sea”; the *Odyssey* had a special charm over his imagination; but we give thanks that we are spared the pain of associating the wandering graves of ocean with his burial; that his sepulchre will be with us, and become one of our shrines for the pilgrimages of genius, and learning, and love.

Who will undertake to analyze the character of this great product of the Divine workmanship? To analyze one of our woodland scenes in autumn, with its changing leaves, its evergreens, birds, and flowers; writing with musical annotations the differing voices of the wind in the oaks and pines, and pointing with the finger to say, “This is sublimity, and this is beauty”; and

setting the outgoings of the morning and evening there in comparison one with the other, — would be, in some respects, a like employment, and the task would be accomplished with the same amount of dissatisfaction in all who have felt the power of this transcendent mind. Its operations were no more a rule for another mind, than the laws of nature in the Pleiades are the rule for the solitary star. Were this the time and place, therefore, and it were becoming in me to attempt anything like a eulogy, I should only pour out my soul with yours, in love and grief, as I do here, directing your thoughts, by the help of such a subject as he and his genius and his services afford, to that God who gave him, and who took him ; — “to Him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth forever.”



Great men are special gifts of God to a nation, and through it to the world. They are special efforts of that same Divine benevolence which gives us Apennines, and Alps, and Lebanons, and Himalayahs. These, the utilitarian and materialist will admonish us, are needful parts of the world's mechanism. None the less on that account a devout mind recognizes them as proofs of goodness in the Deity. The mechanism of human society, for all the practical purposes of life, might work well if there had been no Homer, no Shakespeare, no Milton; but the wisdom and goodness which ordained that the eye and mind should not be wearied with uniform dead levels, and therefore set up the corner-stones of the globe with a view to the benevolent effect upon the earth and its in-

habitants of hills and mountains, are pleased here and there to endow men with transcendent genius for the good of the race. They have an elevating effect upon mankind, by raising the standard of excellence ; they rebuke our grovelling thoughts, purify and ennoble our conceptions, shed a charm over things which otherwise would be tame and wearisome ; they are the wine of life ; they are angels on the ladder with God Almighty above it, filling even our dreams, as well as our waking hours, with assurances that there is something better in reserve for all who seek it, than they have reached. But these gifts of God, these men of genius, are capable of perversion by us, like all his gifts. Occasional large crops may excite impatience and discontent in the young man, through

his desire for a region where profuse vegetation is the general rule. Those special seasons in which God is pleased to turn the attention of men in great numbers to the subject of religion, tempt some to neglect Christian effort, and to look continually after phenomenal events in the religious world. Thus the fame of genius awakens in some the desire to shine in the view of men, to the neglect of slow, patient industry, as providential success in business tempts others to make adventures at the risk of their regular calling and their integrity. But these abuses do not stay the ordinances of Heaven. In every department of life, God bestows upon some men certain things which, however cultivated and improved by effort, are, in a special sense, native endowments; they

are born in these men, and, with their features and stature, are written in God's book. A man of genius is therefore a proper occasion of special praise to God, for his sovereign power and goodness. Men seldom think of this. They worship and serve the creature more than the Creator, who is over all, God blessed forever. They should rather feel disposed to address great men in these words, and for mutual admonition: "And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? For who maketh thee to differ from another? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" Gifts of genius are as really the special gifts of God as the miraculous gifts which led the two Apostles at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple to say, "Ye men of Israel, why

look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk ? ” A wonderful mind is merely an uncommon efflorescence in one of a number of plants of the same species, whose structure is ordained by the all-wise God ; and we are to receive the rare product like every creature of God, with thanksgiving. It is a new illustration of that Divine benevolence which, even in this world of sin and deserved misery, strives to teach us that God is love. But we do not find it to be a common thing for those who read the great poets and prose writers, and look upon works of art, and listen to eloquence and music, and reverence statesmanship, and great military talent, and medical sagacity, and surgical skill, and the fruits of me-

chanical genius, to praise and bless Him who made heaven, earth, and seas, and the fountains of waters. Yet the same hearts, many of them, are led to think of God by viewing the firmament. Now, when we see the bright hosts which adorn the intellectual and moral firmament, we should give thanks to Him that made great lights in the moral, as well as the natural world. To show his power, God is pleased to adorn the world of mind, now and then, with galaxies, clusters; but we say, "The age produced them; the times made them." Who made the age? Our times, — are they not in His hand? One great man in a century might have sufficed; but lo! that same Divine wisdom and love of excellence, which everywhere else at times rejoice to overflow all their banks, make one

land after another the object of affluent goodness in the bestowment of great men in companies ; so that the constellations themselves are not more classified and marshalled than these great lights of their respective lands and times. “ O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men ! ” In the realms of thought, where God, who is a Spirit, should specially be recognized and adored, shall we set up idols ? As one of the curses upon idolaters, it is said, “ Then God gave them up to worship the hosts of heaven. ” It was a sublime and fascinating kind of idolatry ; in the intellectual world it has not ceased. Let men turn their thoughts to God as often as they contemplate a great mind among their fel-

lows. Their worship is due to Him who made Arcturus, Orion, and the chambers of the South ; to Him who made great lights : for his mercy endureth forever.

One of those great lights is now set. Never more shall we see his similitude in any other mind ; but the Divine goodness which gave him to us and to the nation, endureth forever. God has rich gifts in reserve for men, which can not only equal, but surpass, all his creations hitherto. While you mourn your loss, think of Him who made such a mind ; be grateful to the Giver ; worship God.

We have a rare and wonderful product of New England in this master mind. You would not have assigned this great man, with his fervid genius, a birthplace in



our good old staid Massachusetts Ipswich. Along the shores of the Mediterranean you would sooner have selected his birthplace. Regions impatient of rest by reason of volcanic agencies, where fiery streams of an exhaustless crater never become cold, and where the vine and olive, fearless by reason of innocence and simplicity, crowd close up to the deluge-marks of lava, and drop their fruits on them, were more appropriately, in our thoughts, the parallels of his birthplace. Or, at least, from the regions of the South, in our own wonderfully diversified climatology, might we rather have looked for his origin. But no. He is the son of our own New England. Yet Rhode Island and Connecticut, with their more Southern aspect, cannot claim him. The

Granite State must be content to yield a Webster. Vermont might well have nestled his infancy in some of her beautiful nooks and glens. Maine, with her incomparable breadth and length, and wilds, and peerless affluence of rivers, was not indulged with the honor of his nativity. How good it seems to us in Massachusetts, that our soil and climate, and our social life, produced him! We will give thanks for this. "The lines are fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage." The young men of Massachusetts may see, that whatever gifts the God of nature may have bestowed upon them can here find development and prosperous growth. We love our New England and our Massachusetts more than ever for the sake of this dis-

tinguished man. We mourn our loss, but O, give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever! To Him that made great lights; for his mercy endureth forever.

The astronomer who sounds the depths of space with his telescope, is overwhelmed not so much by his discoveries as by the thought of the realms which are yet beyond the reach of mortal vision. The contemplation of great men in this world may properly have the same effect on us with regard to intelligent spirits superior to man. This is God's host! When we consider them we may well say, What is man? Reason, as we possess it, which lifts us above the brutes, shows in a certain sense our inferiority to angels; for the very ne-

cessity of reasoning as we do, reveals that we are below those in whom processes of thought are electrified into lightning speed, or are wholly superseded by intuitions. Though we stand in awe before a great man here, we should cease to do so could we look upon the unfallen sons of God. "Strength and beauty are in his tabernacle." We trace divine wisdom and skill by the microscope, down where mortal discernment faints; but there are yet worlds of minute things still beyond our search. Now, if God has employed his omnipotence in that direction, how must it be toward the opposite pole? Will he reduce animated life down to sponges and barnacles, leaving us in doubt whether they deserve the name of living things? If so, where

will he stop when he creates intelligent spirits in his own image and in his own likeness? “Is there any number of his armies? And on whom doth not his light arise?”

The great man, as we call him, dies. We will suppose him to have been a godless man. “His breath goeth forth; he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” He enters the world of spirits. He was a distinguished statesman. But where was he when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? He was a great orator. But the Spirit of God gave inspiration to the first-born spirits in heaven, whose words, compared with those from the most eloquent lips of man, are like sunbeams

on a street lamp which is left burning after sunrise. He was a great poet; he was a master of song; "The Creation," "The Messiah," are his. But there was a "*Creation*" sung when God laid the foundations of the earth. And when he bringeth in his first begotten into the world, was there not a "*Messiah*"? for he saith, "And let all the angels of God worship him." The music of heaven for a period beyond our computation, ascriptions framed by angelic minds, the learning, the renown, the beauty and majesty of those that excel in strength, "the helmed cherubim and sworded seraphim," and, withal, the accomplishments conferred by divine knowledge and moral beauty on the very humblest of the heavenly host, make the spirit

of the great man from earth feel how poor a thing mere human greatness is, and that nothing is truly great in Heaven which is not first, last, midst, good; that the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; that to acquire the spiritual image of the Redeemer on earth, is the great end for which life was given. To be "a great man" in this world is, of itself, and viewed in connection with endless life, no more than to be a greater worm. A chameleon, or bird of paradise, or peacock, or a magnolia, or a giraffe, or a cedar in Lebanon, are the peers of "a great man" who is distinguished by nothing but natural endowments. "Like sheep, they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning;

and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling." "As a dream when one awaketh, so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image."

But let the great man glory in this, saith God, "that he understandeth and knoweth me." For whatever orders of beings there may be in the universe, we know this, that our human nature is capable of being personally associated with the Godhead. In the man Christ Jesus, inhabited by the Word who "was with God, and was God," we see that man's nature has capacity unsurpassed by that of any creature. We do well, therefore, to consider what it must be for one whom God has endowed with pre-eminent mental gifts, to become an inhabitant of heaven. Placed upon the path of life, a



career is opened before him as a subject of redemption, and allied by likeness of nature to the Lamb who is the light of heaven, which is never to find its goal, for it is lost in the infinitude of God.

And now, while we worship here, this distinguished friend has entered upon his deathless career.

If he complied with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus, he is saved ; and “ there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.”

The last public address which he made was a confession of his faith. He set his seal to the doctrines of the cross as preached here. “ We have attached ourselves to this form of faith,” he said, speaking for you and for himself, “ because we believe it to

be the old religion, the true religion.” This comes to us now with a special practical interest, relating to his eternal peace. His last utterances to the world contain a solemn and affecting appeal to ministers everywhere to preach more about eternity. “There is sometimes upon their lips,” he says, in the last paragraph but one of his address, “that tremendous expression, — whatever it means in the original, — ‘The redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever.’” His faith in the eternity of future retribution was inwrought among the deepest convictions of his nature. Some one was speaking to him in a disparaging manner of that doctrine, and quoted with disapprobation some of the awful expressions commonly used in expressing the subject. Our friend

replied to him, in that gentle way which we all marked and loved in him, "But are you not sometimes afraid that these things are true? I am." He was not ashamed of his faith. He fully maintained, on the public occasion alluded to, his assurance that it furnished the broadest field for mental culture. Is not he himself a demonstration of his claim? I will not speak of him with any sectarian feeling, as having been, from choice, not merely from the force of education, a Congregationalist. His address before the New England Society at New York defines his position on that subject. But to what an unfathomable depth do all such things descend compared with this: Did he accept pardon and salvation offered to him through the blood of Jesus? If not, "the least in

the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” If he did, what spirit from this world will, in the progress of eternity, be a brighter jewel in the diadem of Jesus?

The responsibility of preaching statedly in the hearing of such a man, and of standing to him in the relation of pastor, now assumes an importance which you may well suppose is overwhelming. The manner in which he spoke to me of preaching to which we had listened together, showed me that whatever reached the heart and conscience of the humblest member of the congregation was sure to do its work in his. Parting with him on board the steamer, he held my hand, as if loath to say farewell. I said, “We shall all remember you”; when he interrupted me,

seeing what I was about to say, and replied, "Yes, remember me in the best sense." He felt the power of prayer. No man was ever prayed for more than he by members of this church. The results of preaching and of hearing are with him now beginning their ceaseless history. Much of my time, since I heard of his death, has been occupied in thinking in what way, and on what occasions, I might have been more faithful, more judicious, more in earnest with him; you perceived by his remarks here, at our late festival, that "we were made manifest in" his "conscience," but O that one might say, reversing the order of an Apostle's assurance, with regard to his own preaching, "and we trust also" — "to God." No affected humility in the

preacher of the Gospel should prevent him from giving its full credit to the power which that Gospel asserts for itself to be a savor of life unto life to them that believe. If saved, our friend is saved, not as a great man, but as a pardoned sinner, by the same mercy which saved the penitent thief, and Saul of Tarsus, and all who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. If the Gospel, as preached here, has been the means of his salvation, you can imagine what the relations will be in heaven between him and his pastor. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." In writing to

him at Halifax, in a letter which came too late, I told him that one of my fondest hopes with regard to heaven was that I might know and love him there.

See, in the worth of his soul, which you can in some measure appreciate, the worth of your own souls. We are each immortal, like him; and, in the progress of our being, the joys and sorrows of eternity would be to each of us all that they can be to any other. Permit me, as your minister, to direct your thoughts to that vacant seat of his, and to remind you that your place and mine in the house of God soon will know us no more. Remember the testimony which he gave to the truth as it is in Jesus. “Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown,

so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." You have been happy to be associated with this friend and parishioner in the ordinances of public worship. You are to behold him this week as he pauses here for an hour on his way to the house appointed for all the living. May all this have the effect to make you do with your might whatsoever your hand findeth to do. Be grateful for this friend; profit by all that you have known of him; make good use of the talents and opportunities allotted you; live for the approbation of the God that made you, and the Saviour that redeemed you, and for the society of just men made perfect. In your redeemed natures, there will be found latent powers and faculties which will make you cease



to covet the gifts bestowed on great men here. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." "AND I WILL GIVE HIM THE MORNING STAR." Amen.



A D D R E S S

AT THE

FUNERAL OF HON. RUFUS CHOATE,

IN THE

ESSEX STREET MEETING-HOUSE, BOSTON,

**July 23, 1859.**

BY

NEHEMIAH ADAMS, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE ESSEX STREET CHURCH.



## FUNERAL ADDRESS.

---

“THE beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places.” And can this be he? Is he dead? “All ye that are about him bemoan him; and all ye that know his name say, How is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod!” Could no judge be found who, in this cause, would rule at his motion? Was there no jury whom he could persuade, or at least divide? Alas! would not even the executioner pay him courtesy?

As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so was he among the sons. The

whirlwind passed by ; the fruit-tree, loaded with fragrant fruit, lies as low as the withered tree.

In the halls of Congress he rose to speak, and one and another who did not care to listen, and were departing, caught the first tones of his voice, paused, turned back, and became enchained by his eloquence. He was to speak before some institute, and an assembly came together which was never surpassed, and their tribute to his power over them was as rich a chaplet as ever descended on the brows of orators. The merchant princes laid their questions before him, and his counsels gave them almost the assurance of a verdict. Men bound him to their service as soon as they anticipated trouble, or they bought his promise not to

appear against them. The profession were assembled, and to the stranger it was a chief object of interest that he was there. His illustrious friend and yours is dying at Marshfield; many are round about him; but whose is that well-proportioned form, in the front of the picture, with that lithe, graceful carriage of the body, that striking head, marked throughout with genius, that face bending toward the dying man with an expression in which great thoughtfulness and great love mingle? And has all come to this? Weep, cities and villages! Weep, halls of learning, halls of legislation, halls of justice! Weep, forum, bar, pulpit! He who commanded so great reverence and love is dead. In that beautiful idiom of the tongue in which he was lord, he is

“no more.” Now, like the common dead, he waits upon the Christian minister for the funeral service, and then “the clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him; and every man shall draw after him, as there are innumerable before him.”

Has all that rich, gathered harvest of learning and knowledge, all that wisdom and prudence in affairs, all that acquaintance with the master-spirits of his race, and that power to apply their beautiful creations and inventions, perished? That tongue should never long be silent which wrought with such magic. That mind is just the representative of a world of fancy and imagination which we need, to teach us how to invest the commonplace and literal with the spell of beauty and originality. How can



we do without him? No one else can satisfy our want. In the closing words of his speech at a recent celebration of Webster's birthday, we shall often say,—as we listen to orators, or try, perchance, ourselves to be such,—“O for one hour of” Choate! But is he “no more”? What error does that pathetic phrase contain! If he fulfilled the purpose for which his Creator made him a free agent, he is all that he ever was, and will be infinitely more. For he who looks on that coffin and continues to be a materialist, and says that that great soul perished with the body, must not accuse others of credulity. We decline to argue with him.

How gentle he was in his intercourse with you. He gave you a chair as no one

else would do it. He persuaded you at his table to receive something from him, in a way that nothing so gross as language can describe. He treated every man as though he were a gentleman; and he treated every gentleman almost as he would a lady. His playfulness was so wise that you would as much admire as smile. One word would often drop from him of such comprehensive, picturesque meaning and beauty, that the whole company would sit in smiles and think about it, as before a picture, till he skilfully turned the conversation. Then again, how inquiring, how docile he seemed as he sat and listened to you! His intense desire to know everything about a subject led him to ask simple questions, to express a childlike wonder, to press you further,—

all which was the musing mood of his own mind, though it seemed like simplicity. I have seen him as earnest in having one tell him how the tenor, alto, and soprano stood, relatively, on the score, and why, as though it were a point in jurisprudence. He made you feel that you were teaching him; and you forgot for the moment how much wiser your information made him than it had ever made you.

It will not be deemed unsuitable if his pastor should, “now and here,” as he himself would say, open to you a slight view of him as a parishioner. The intervals were not long between some expression or token of his remembrance,—all the more grateful as they were oftentimes delicate and simple; though now and then

the valuable contribution to the pastor's library of the work in sixteen volumes, or in six, or in four, or two, reflected as much honor upon the giver, who showed his own power to appreciate and select such books, as it made the receiver feel the obligation to raise his own standard of acquirements. It was the man himself appearing before you in his tokens of remembrance which gave them their principal value. If he is at Washington, he must needs tell a minister at home, in his letter, how "the Sabbath bells do not a little aggravate homesickness." See, once for all, in a note accompanying a royal octavo edition of Wordsworth, the man, original and peculiar in his kindness to a pastor as he was in all other qualities;—for there is little

risk in supposing that very few men ever wrote just such a letter as the following under the same circumstances:—

“My dear Sir,—Having had a child born within a few days, I have thought I could do no honester thing than to send my minister a volume of poetry,—a *votive* volume, as Wordsworth might say. I shall be sorry if you happen to own the edition.

I am most truly,

Your friend and servant,

R. CHOATE.”

October 2, 18—.

Had he been an angel, could any Christian pastor ever have feared for his own sake to preach before him, knowing that such a heart was in his bosom? No, the only pain was in the intenseness of the

desire to say or do any thing which might be to the spiritual benefit of such a man.

I have kneeled with him in prayer when a great sorrow was upon his heart. I have stood with him as he leaned against the door and wept. Yes, I have seen him weep. And when *he* wept, you will believe that it was to me, and would be to any man, "a great mourning; as the mourning of Hadadrimmon."

A very short time before he was to deliver his address before the New England Society of New York, I asked him if he had yet written it. "Not the seven-thousandth part of a word," was his idiomatic answer. "But," said he, "I believe that I shall appropriate a speech made at Park Street Church the other evening." It

was a charge at the ordination of a young friend from Geneva, who was to labor as an evangelist in Canada. Coming as the candidate did from Geneva, it was natural for any one who addressed him to speak of the Puritans in their connection with Geneva. The few, unambitious words on that topic, on that occasion, reported in a newspaper, were an accidental spark which entered the furnace-chamber of his great mind, and kindled it for a performance which will not soon be forgotten. It was like him thus to recognize one who had done him a service even unintentionally; nor did he fear the imputation of plagiarism; for his taking of another man's thoughts was as when the sun plagiarizes the waters, and turns them into showers,

and rainbows, and gorgeous sunsets, and harvest, and grass upon the mountains and herbs for the service of man.

His love of nature had a most interesting property, which, theoretically, one might be tempted, without knowing the man, to say was not agreeable to the highest reach of sentiment. He loved Nature chiefly in her utility. He was, in his own sphere, creator, and he loved things not only for themselves, but as creating. The ocean must have its ships and commerce to please him; it must report to him how it fills harbors and estuaries, that he may love it supremely. Nothing was more poetical to him than that which he so often speaks of in his addresses, — “the hum of labor.” A mechanic was with him Homeric. The ringing of an



anvil, the whirring of a planing-machine, the factory bells, and wheels, and looms, were all of them to his mind impersonations of beauty. He would, perhaps, be more imaginative over a great wheat-field, than in the solemn woods, so far was his mind from anything dreamy, or from being sentimental for its own sake. Yet when he was a boy, and drove his father's cow, and cut his switch, as no boy in that capacity must fail to do who would drive well, he has said that more than once, when he had thrown away his switch, he has returned to find it, and has carried it back and thrown it under the tree from which he took it, for, he said, "Perhaps there is, after all, some yearning of nature between them still." He had not walked far one

morning, a few years ago, he said, and he gave as a reason, that his attention was taken by a company of those large, creeping things which lie on their backs in the paths as soon as the light strikes them. "But of what use was it for you to help them over with your cane, knowing that they would become supine again?" "I gave them a fair start in life," he said, "and my responsibility was at an end." He has probably helped to place more people on their feet than otherwise; and no one has enjoyed it more than he.

Let us unite and do him honor, in view of his decision of character in connection with political affairs. I am not to intrude them here, nor is it important for my purpose to say, or to know, of what school or

party he was at any time a member ; for had it been science, or religion, or business, in which he had shown the decision of which I speak, it would have served my purpose as well.

If there ever was a party or class of men who had reason to be proud of their position and relationship to each other, it was those old, conservative, very respectable Federalists, many of whom bore so close a resemblance to the old school of English gentlemen. With such men the idea and the name of Democrat were exactly opposite to all their instincts and associations of ideas. Nowhere was this more true than of the Federalists of Essex County in this State, where Mr. Choate had his birth, and where he entered into professional life. Re-

membering that these deep-seated associations of ideas have been, till quite recently, transmitted from Federalists to old Whigs, it has seemed to me that in Mr. Choate's alliance, through the force of conviction, with the party with which he has of late sympathized, we have an illustration of decision of character for which all men, irrespective of their creeds, must do him honor. He had no political interest of his own to promote by it ; he was conscious of seeming to forsake, not only his old associates, but some of his long-cherished associations of ideas, which, in a man of his mental structure, did greater violence to his feelings than anything else.

You will perceive that my remarks have no reference to the correctness or incorrect-

ness of his political opinions, at one time or another ; but meeting around him, as you do to-day, with your party banners trailed, and with reversed arms, you will all confess that in such a change as he made in his political relationships, and for the way in which he sustained himself in it, he is worthy of honor and love, for manliness of character, for moral courage, for noble daring, for self-reliance, and for his power to give a reason of the hope that was in him.

He was no changeling in anything. He carried heavy anchorage. Wherever he dropped it, there he rode, tides, winds, tempests, notwithstanding, and, more than all, with gallant barks around him more prudently retiring from the roadsteads till the weather should be fair.

He was not insensible to animadversions upon him. He loved the good opinion of his fellow-men, because he loved them, and he was very sorry when those whom he wished to respect blamed him.

A minister, who took a deep interest in political affairs, once said severe and sharp things about him. His friends were moved with resentment; but Mr. Choate said, with evident grief, and like a child, "I am disposed to write him a letter, and tell him that he is mistaken." Few things in him have ever touched me more than this incident, in view of all the circumstances of the case.

It may seem remarkable to some, that a man of his nervous temperament, and subject to such great and frequent demands

upon it, should not have fallen into the habitual use of some powerful narcotic. Had he done so, it would have plainly manifested itself in one so constantly before the public as he. Exaltation of spirits by a powerful narcotic is inevitably followed by a corresponding depression, unfitting its miserable subject for continuous mental labor. But we all know how consecutive he was in his mental efforts. When he had performed one great service, he was ready for another of a different but equally laborious kind, or for his daily work.

Some have been interested to inquire whether he had the artificial aid here referred to, in his mental efforts. The highly respected physician who has been his medical attendant for twenty years places this,

by his denial of it, beyond a question. He would have known it if it were so. On the contrary, he says that he could ordinarily put him to sleep with a Dover's powder. Once, at home, using laudanum in a tooth, it produced a sickness which showed that his system was a stranger to such a narcotic.\*

He made the impression upon those who

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\* Since this Address was delivered, a gentleman of the highest respectability has called upon me to say, that, to his personal knowledge, a friend, a few years since, told Mr. Choate of a prevailing belief that he used opium, and that Mr. Choate replied, in the most emphatic manner, "*I do not know the taste of opium.*" The perfect confutation of this charge, which even charitable men feared might have confirmation in the corrugated, worn look occasioned by intense efforts, should be an admonition to us; while, no doubt, it will awaken, in many, that stronger love which comes to a generous mind with the regret at having entertained an injurious suspicion.



witnessed his daily life, that he was as pure and upright in his private history, as he was honorable and noble in his intercourse with men. He therefore needs no vindication here, nor elsewhere; and in this respect he is fortunate above many who have been much in public life, or have in any way become pre-eminent. Tempted, of course, as we are, if, like us, he sinned, he needed repentance, and the blood that cleanseth from sin. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. If he was mortal, he was a sinner; and if he was not mortal, why is he there? Whether he did or did not experience that new birth, without which no man can see the kingdom of God, we are not called upon to decide. There are things which make us hope. He knew what

he must do to be saved. He was speaking with a Christian friend, in his recent sickness, about his feelings under the preaching of the Gospel. He said, "Any man who goes to perdition under that preaching, goes on his own responsibility."

He spoke at that time of Mr. Webster's last hours, and he discussed the question of that great man's probable relation to his God and Saviour. He emphatically said, with deep emotion: "I believe he was right; he comprehended the scheme";—and he repeated the words, "he comprehended the scheme." Mr. Choate could say, as Mr. Webster once said on the causeway between Somerville and Medford: "My father and my mother are in heaven; their faith is good enough for me; I have never wavered as to my confidence in it."

Where there is a clear perception of the way to be saved through Christ,— where one “comprehended the scheme,” the only question which remains is, Did the heart yield to it? Did, at least, the certain and near approach of death, by the grace of God, (for even death is, of itself, without power to change the heart,) constrain the soul to accept the provisions of the Gospel? The rule of the Gospel is, that a man who knows the truth shall confess Christ before men.

In the absence of the highest kind of evidence, we are permitted to remember, that the last public effort of this friend of ours was made on a platform over the very spot where he, at this moment, sleeps in death, and that that effort was a testimony to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and

an appeal to its ministers to make full proof of their ministry. One thing is certain, that for this he to-day has a reward; for what an assembly is this! met here on that spot where he lifted up his voice and gave that which proved to be his dying testimony to the religion of Jesus. God says: "Them that honor me I will honor."

O how easy it is for Christian love to hope that the mercy which removes our transgressions from us, may have made him one of its trophies, and that, through a peril and hazard the thought of which should be a warning to us amidst the cares of this life and the temptations of our respective callings, his soul was led to comply with the conditions of peace which God has revealed! "We must think more of that

Great Country," he said to his son the day before he died.

On board the steamer he said to me, "I am going to the Isle of Wight." I believe that he expected there to find his grave. He knew that it was only a question of time with regard to the issue of his disease. He had as great a dread of bodily suffering, and of its effect upon those who witnessed it, as I ever knew.

It was, therefore, one of the many marks of extraordinary power in this man, that he was willing to die far from home, rather than know that those whom he loved were enduring the pangs which his protracted sufferings might occasion.

He once said, speaking of sudden death :  
"I agree with De Quincey on that sub-

ject.”\* “The prayer,” said Mr. Choate, “‘From sudden death, good Lord, deliver us,’ must mean, *from death unprepared for*, as the expression is also rendered. Otherwise I protest against it.” His wish was not granted.

But death prepared for by means of any sufferings, is followed by a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. He may have been led about in the dark wilderness of sickness and pain, to humble him and to prove him, and that he might know what was in his heart, and whether he would love the Lord his God, or no.

The words of parting are nearly all said,

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\* Miscellaneous Essays, Ticknor and Fields's edition, p. 168.

but we shrink from this separation. “Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.” We would keep him here ; we would be in his company. Seldom did love mingle in greater proportions with the honor paid to the illustrious dead, than is everywhere the case in the tributes which he receives.

How true it is that we are spontaneously treated as we have treated others, and that in this respect, “with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” He fills the thoughts of those who knew him, much like a deceased and loved relative ; you would almost believe that he is bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh.

The future is, to my mind, filled with

him. I think of heaven: is he there? I think of the spirits of just men made perfect: is he among them? The Son of Man will come in the clouds of heaven: I think, his eyes will see Him. There shall be a resurrection of the dead; his form will partake of it. There is a day of judgment at the end of the world; he will stand and be judged. Eternity! it will be for him!

Great Work of God! Great Ornament of human kind! Great Friend! If such be the will of God, one great joy in heaven will be to meet you there, to mark your radiant beauty and glory, to hear your new song to redeeming love, to learn forever your wondrous history among the ransomed, and with the angels that excel in strength.





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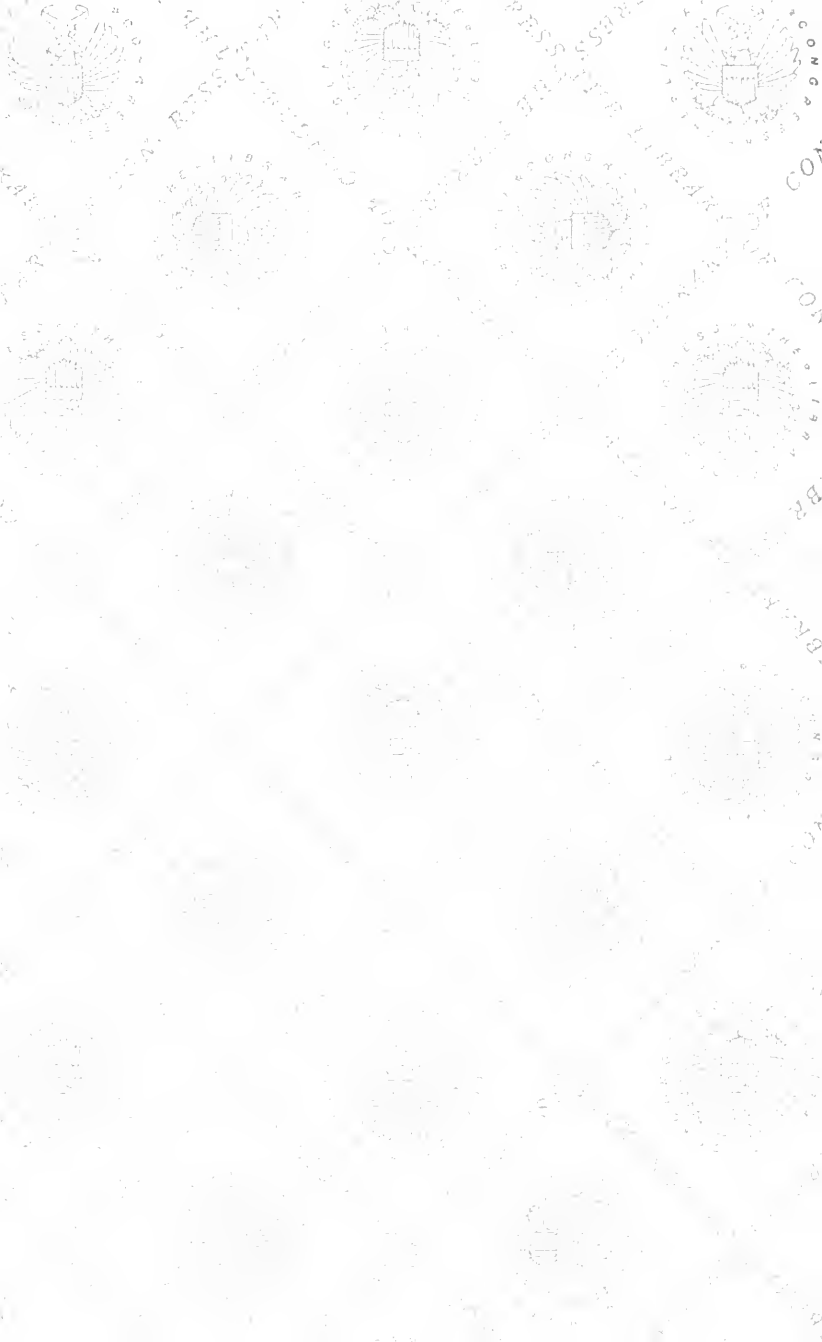
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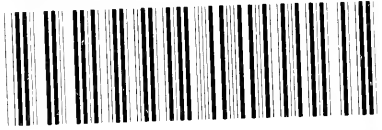
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